

SPEECH

OF

HON. R. W. JOHNSON, OF ARKANSAS,

1874 - 1879 ON THE

SLAVERY QUESTION.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JUNE 7, 1850.

The House having under consideration, as in Committee of the Whole, the President's Message communicating the Constitution of California, Mr. JOHNSON said :

MR. CHAIRMAN : The same necessity is upon me which impels others to address you. No fondness for my own comfort and convenience governs me in it, or I should remain silent. I speak from a sense of duty to my constituents, and of devotion to the interests and rights of the South, as well as to this Union.

I advocate, Mr. Chairman, a union of the people of the South, and a unity of the States of the South, for the defence and preservation of the South. This, sir, is a policy which I never could have dreamed of, until now that I see what is around and before me. I condemn, as I have been taught, by the writings of all our past great statesmen, the division of this country into sectional parties. They have advised against it. But I am not to be deprived of my reason by a false construction of their advice ; nor is an earnest consideration of facts and surrounding circumstances to be interdicted. They would not desire it of their posterity, but would reply that they too, had been preceded by wise and great men in this world, and if they had followed counsels other than those of their own reason, exercised upon the circumstances of the times, there had been no revolution—no independence—no formation of new States—no liberty in America. I will not consent that open enemies, covert traitors, or misguided friends, shall give that construction to the counsel of past great men, which shall disunite the South and yield them up a certain prey.

I ask, first, that you will regard the circumstances under which Washington uttered his emphatic advice against sectional parties. Under the old Confederation, it was found that our Government was utterly deficient—that it had neither scope, strength, nor unity—that it was divided up by jealousies and sectional parties, and could not last. The very same incongruous interests, rivalries, and jealousies, existed then which exist now. They are not greater now than they were then, and they existed between the North and South. But the States were weak, and there was the highest necessity for their union. The several States appeared in Convention, and the sectional parties were unyielding in their demands for equality in rights and protection. The result was a glorious Constitution and a just and happy Government. Had it not been for that firm and determined sectional spirit, this would never have been made the just and perfect government that it was.

But it is now, in its growth, fast changing its character; and if we do not, as a section, resist with the same unyielding firmness, it will soon become oppression to, and destructive of the minority.

With the new Constitution, General Washington was installed; and after eight years of eminent service, uttered his Farewell Address, which has been so often referred to recently, and so constantly sought to be made the means of disuniting and destroying the South. It was never uttered from his lips as counselling us to submit to wrong, or to a perversion of the principles and spirit in which our Government was framed. If now living, I firmly believe he would indignantly condemn the sectionalism and injustice of the North.

Those who have quoted that address, will be found to be such only as have affiliated with the aggressors and have partially or wholly abandoned the South in this struggle. Those of them who have been actuated by just and honorable motives, can only be compared to the officious and foolish fellow who grasps his friend in the midst of a conflict, whilst his adversary is permitted to stab him.

Let those read it who have thus construed it. It was directed against the agitation of this and all other sectional questions, and against all manner of injustice, and inculcated modera-

tion and pure justice. But that advice has been disregarded and trampled under foot by the North. The Constitution itself, has been violated in the very letter by whole States and communities of the North, as in the matter of State laws and individual action concerning fugitives slaves.

The national flag has proved to be no protection to a Southern man's property, as in the Creole and other cases. The Government itself, has lost affinity for, and become hostile to the South, as is exemplified in the fraudulent formation of the California Constitution, and many other instances. The very States of the North, with but a solitary exception, (and that exception exists only in name,) stand upon this floor banded together by solemn action of their people and home governments, with no common object but hostility to the South; with no common principle but the exclusion of the South from every foot of our common territory. Was this done in pursuance of the advice of Washington? Is such like the inculcation of his Farewell Address? Will any one dispute the existence of this sectional party, which numbers its members without regard to politics, commands a heavy majority in this House, and when all men concede that Dickinson, of New York, and a few men of that class, for their patriotic support of the Constitution in its spirit of justice to all parts of the Union, are upon the floors of Congress for the last time, and are bound to die beneath the hostility of the relentless North? No one will dispute it.

Are we to submit to these things? And submit humbly and quietly? And be denounced as disunionists, because we protest? No sir.

This Government commends itself to our support only so long as it is just to us and secures our rights. It exists only by the consent of the States, and is based upon the hearts and affections of the people. Being, cruel, and insulting injustice that shall open up to our view, to be wrought out by the energies and power of this Government, in the course of a quarter or a half century, a destiny of degradation—of poverty and annihilation, is not the repast to which we were invited. *It will sweep away the affections of the people and the assent of the States.* This Government will then fall, and it ought to fall.

As I fear that this era rapidly approaches, I will proclaim the danger, and no apprehension for the defection of friends, or the denunciation of enemies, or of consequences of any character personal to myself, shall deter me from the task.

If we would preserve our Government we must prevent injustice. Oppression and destruction follow injustice. If we would prevent injustice, we must unite at the South. It is easier to resist incipient oppression, than it is to overthrow an established tyranny.

Calm and collected, sir, confident in the security of a majority-power, sits upon this floor the Northern representation. We of the South can have little hope. The utmost they will do is to adopt some measure that, as it is commonly expressed, will save "*Southern honor*;" but it *must*, however, covertly phrased, circumscribe our *limits*, enfeeble our *power*, and deprive us of the means to defend our *rights*, *at a future day*. Remonstrate, reason, appeal to them as we may, upon any subject however trivial, which has relation to slave property, unless we get an answer of insult and reproach, we get no other answer than the same fixed and inexorable Northern vote.

Debate for utility in this hall is idle. This battle must be translated to other parts—to our States, counties, and precincts. It must there be made the subject matter of discussion and action. The South must unite—must drive from power those who will not unite to defend her cause—make the battle hottest at home, and we will be represented truly. Let those who will not contemplate the evils prepared for our section, and exhibit fortitude in resisting their infliction, leave our section, and go northward, where they will not be called upon to share our ruin. But as it is, they sit an incubus upon the Southern mind, with no other result than to produce confusion and distraction.

In the first administration of this Government, the vote upon the apportionment bill became strictly sectional. Washington vetoed it, and then declared his fears of the instability and insecurity of the Union. His Farewell Address was levelled at the sectionalism of this very slavery question. Have we of the South revived it? Far from it. But the North have labored, and have labored successfully to do so. *They are now wholly and entirely a sectional party.*

Whilst they were progressing to this point, there beat not for this Union a truer heart than the heart of the South. When our brethren of Maine struggled for their rights to a pitiful strip of country, at the imminent risk of war, who adhered to them with warm hearts and willing hands, more firmly than the South? If they were cast off, it was not by a Southern administration.

When the question of 54° 40' was made it was made by the South, knowing that it was all north of 36° 30', and must be free territory, and who more firmly and devotedly adhered to it than the South?

But now we ask, who set on foot this sectional spirit? Let facts answer.

Before the Southern people had held the first, single, solitary public meeting upon the subject of slave property, *ten* Northern States, (two-thirds of the whole North in States, three fourths in population,) had, in open Legislation, passed upon, and absolutely instructed their Representatives to vote for the Wilmot proviso, and fix it down upon the South. Yes sir, to establish for us, their

brethren and friends, by law, incipient ruin and degradation. Here then was a Northern party already established.

Its advance since that time has been such, that it is scarcely possible for a citizen of the South to recover a fugitive slave. Mobs have been raised, and the blood of our people spilt when they have attempted to claim their own. Societies, under cover of religion, have been formed, and missions sent to the South to teach abolition. Churches and religious communities have been divided and broken up; the most pious members of Southern churches are rejected from their communion table; and the most meek, eloquent, and learned of our ministers are excluded by their brethren from the *Northern* pulpit. These facts argue our degradation as well as oppression. This looks very much like a Northern party, *and a very bad Northern party.*

But this is not all. There is but one State in the North that has not now passed the Wilmot proviso, and there is not one which is not represented in this House to be hostile to slave property. Is this no sectional party? And must we fold our arms and submit? Or have we any other hope than in a united and firm resistance? Sir, we can have no other reply to those men of the South who advise submission, and who decry sectional parties, and who divide, distract, and desert us, than that they betray their own constituents, and the whole South.

Speeches have been made in this Hall by Southern members, openly taking the side of the North and openly charging the South with the *aggression*. The speech of the honorable gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. STANLEY) was pre eminent in this respect. Indeed, such has been the tenor of his whole course in this Congress, upon this subject, that we feel it to have been a continued defence of the North, and an implied assault upon the South.

The gentleman from North Carolina attempted, with labored argument and weary research, to establish the impression that all this struggle for the rights of the South was a mere party struggle, designed as a means to oppose this administration. No impression could be more fatal to the South, or more entirely uncalled for. No impression could be more false; in fact, no motive more utterly misconceived and misrepresented.

The primary cause of all our difficulty is, the disposition to be made of the Territory acquired from Mexico two years ago. Yet he has traversed the Congressional records for the last ten or fifteen years, and taken up the matter of fugitive slaves particularly, to prove that our contention for the rights of the South is a mere party movement of the Democracy. A party movement! Could anything be further from the truth? Could anything be more false? Throughout the whole of this Congress, and upon every proposition which affected the question of slavery, either directly or collaterally, the vote has proved strictly sectional. We all feel that it is a question entirely above party allegiance—we know that it overpowers and masters all other considerations on this floor, and we see it daily exemplified in the solid phalanx of Northern votes to assail, and in the cordial union of Southern members, Whigs and Democrats, to defend. A mere party movement, and for party purposes! Shame upon the assertion so empty of all truth. How then does it happen, that this administration is to be supported in its California policy by the great body of Northern Democrats! How is it that it is to be opposed by the great body of Southern Whigs? How is it, that in speeches of Southern Whigs, in the House and Senate, and in their constant conversation outside of these Halls, they declare their utter hostility to the idea of admitting California, until all other of these vexed questions are forever settled?

Sir, it is no party movement. It is sectional. The North are united. They are a sectional party, banded together by the solemn action of their State authorities, whilst the South is divided up. The crime of our ultimate overthrow must rest at the door of those Southerners who refuse to unite in a fixed resolve to demand and have our rights. We can have justice if we declare it with one voice. Sir, I will not tolerate the treacherous counsels of every self-conceited wiseacre who may seek, for what purposes God only knows, to disunite the South. Respect for this House alone can prevent me from breathing out the contempt and abhorrence I feel for all such in common with the Southern delegation.

Sir, the wrecks of parties are upon this floor, but there is no party here. There is no Democracy, no Whiggery on this floor, when it comes to a territorial or slavery question; and so strong is the repugnance existing between the Northern and Southern sections of each, that it affects all former party relations, and produces open laughter by its absurdity when urged as a motive by poor, lost, and benighted partizans. I strike no blow at the Southern Whig who is true to the rights of the South, nor will he strike the true Southern Democrat. I will stand by him as his brother, and we will together reprobate, and together abandon to his fate the miserable and contracted party hack. There is no Democracy and Whiggery upon the Territorial bills; but there is a Northern and a Southern party, and he who represents it otherwise is guilty of wilful falsehood for some grovelling purpose.

I will be allowed to say, Mr. Chairman, that the speech of the honorable gentleman from North Carolina is the most ingenious, hypocritical, and dangerous mass of misrepresentation that has emanated from any Southern member of this House during the present session of Congress. It

is ingenious, unfair, and dangerous in this, that it falsely represents the present mighty struggle to be the mere movement of party for party purposes—ingenious in this, that it locates our discontents upon the fugitive slave question, presenting that question in bold relief, whilst it keeps comparatively out of view the territorial question, which is the great question of political power, and to which all other questions are mere matters auxiliary and incidental—it is ingenious in this, that those who stand out for the rights of the South are represented as disunionists, and veneration for the Union, with bitter malediction, is invoked against those who thus truly represent, and would faithfully preserve the rights of the South.

It is not true, that this Union was made to be preserved in any other than in a spirit of justice, equality, and protection to all its parts. And *it is true* that those only are the enemies of this Union who would violate this spirit, seize all the Territories, and thus create a vast hostile political power, which, created in wrong, must end in oppression, and in the ultimate ruin of the South. The true friends of this Union are those who would hold it to the objects for which it was created, and it will never be dissolved so long as that effort may be successful; and as such I concur, with them, and will hesitate at no conceivable sacrifice.

Sir, with a few more remarks I will leave for the consideration of the country the remarkable speech of the gentleman from North Carolina. On the 7th page he says, (and, Mr. Chairman, it reveals an unsuspected fact.)

“Mark, Mr. Chairman, my argument is not to defend the Abolitionists, or agitators, but to prove that the North—the great body of the people—are not enemies to the South.”

Yet, sir, he quotes Gott’s resolution, and defends it ably, whilst he suppresses the preamble so offensive to the Southern people, and both of which I now publish, to wit:

“Whereas, The traffic now prosecuted in this Metropolis of the Republic, in human beings, as chattels, is contrary to natural justice and the fundamental principles of our political system, and is notoriously a reproach to our country throughout Christendom, and is a serious hindrance to the progress of republican liberty among the nations of the earth: therefore,

“Resolved, That the Committee for the District of Columbia be instructed to report a bill as soon as practicable, prohibiting the *slave trade* in said District.”

The gentleman defended this resolution ably, and defended it out of the mouths of other men than himself, but he suppressed the preamble wholly, and you would never have dreamed of the bitterness and insult conveyed and expressed, if you had awaited the declaration of this excellent Southern advocate.

Portions of the remarks of the gentleman, unfortunately for himself, fully admit the justice of the complaints of the true Southern Representatives. As, for instance, he says:

“But I must hurry on. One word as to the Wilmot proviso. I shall not discuss the constitutional question. The subject is worn out. It would be as great an outrage to the Southern people to enact it as if it were constitutional. The Southern people, with great unanimity, believe, as I do, that to enact the Wilmot proviso would be ‘an act of gross injustice and wrong.’ And though, as a private citizen, and as a member of our State Legislature, I have opposed the suggestion of a dissolution of the Union, should it be adopted, yet I believe the people of my State will feel called upon, if it is enacted in any law this session, to consult in a State Convention if it is not time to inquire whether our Northern brethren intend to regard us as equals, or to treat us with unkindness! Whatever North Carolina does, I shall abide by. She will not, without great cause of complaint, be driven to think of disunion. I believe the minds of a large majority of both parties there regard with horror the thought of disunion; but if your legislation here impresses upon the mind of her people that you are unfriendly to us, she will, without bluster or threats, provide for her honor and security in such manner as the world will justify. I will not believe you will enact the Wilmot proviso. There is no necessity for it.”

Here he admits the shameful outrage of provisoism, but says *he does not believe there is any necessity for it*. He clearly means, as do Senators Benton and Webster, (and he is of the same class of Southern advocates,) that slaves cannot prosper, and will not go to our Territories; and though we dispute it ever so much, he is clearly willing to yield our rights, and to throw into the hostile scale against us all the *vast political power* which these Territories must carry with them. In fact, on the 15th page, he says:

“Then, as to the admission of California—as to what is maliciously called the Executive proviso—he who goes to the Nashville Convention to produce opposition to the Government on this account, is no friend of his country, and is in favor of disunion, no matter what Congress does, or refuses to do.”

Again, he says:

"I believe, Mr. Chairman, if we reject the application of California for admission as a State, it will be productive of the most calamitous consequences. It will raise a sectional feeling throughout this broad land that may never be allayed. I cannot vote against her admission for any reason I have yet heard."

And this he says, whilst we, the true Southerners, contend exactly the reverse—that her admission endangers dissolution. Thus he proposes to give up California without a settlement of the residue of the territorial question, knowing that she will no sooner be admitted than that New Mexico, with her heavy majority of Mexican people, will present another similar hostile Constitution, and must also be admitted. Following her will also come the State of Utah, and the entrance to those countries, and their future political power, will be sealed forever against the South. In fact, the gentleman from North Carolina says, on his 8th page:

"I see no danger to our existence in the admission of New Mexico as a free State. I had rather have her there than to have a free Mexican State not under the influence of our Constitution and laws."

What a conclusion! And says again, afterwards:

"A single word upon the question of Territorial Governments. I see no plan better than that recommended by the President, and I shall cordially support it."

The gentleman must know that *they* will not be admitted as States unless they exclude slavery. It must be true that the gentleman misrepresents the citizens of his district; for the sentiments he expresses are at variance with all the best interests and honor of the South.

I would here cease, Mr. Chairman, content with having shown the Northern predilections and destructive principles, of the gentleman, but that I regard it as a duty, to show in his own language the incidious blow he would strike at the *harmony and kind feelings* of sister Southern States. The impelling motives I leave to our Southern people, to judge and to appreciate. To link with this thrust, the idea of disunion, will not sanctify the means here used, or disguise the contemptible nature of the game that is played. He says, on the 14th page:

"If by any aggressions on the part of the North—which I do not anticipate—this Union is to be dissolved, I tell gentlemen North Carolina will form no part of a Southern Confederacy, whose ruling politicians entertain opinions like those avowed by some of the Southern Democracy on this floor. We will build our great railroad, and before we become hewers of wood and drawers of water for Virginia and South Carolina, we will try, trusting in Providence, to stand up, "solitary and alone." They would soon involve us in war on account of black sailors. North Carolina has not been treated by these sisters with kindness and respect. In 1842, South Carolina passed resolutions, and sent them here, reflecting very unbecomingly on North Carolina, and intimating that she was encouraging abolition, *because* her people voted against Mr. Van Buren! Time has proved we were right. Virginia but a few years since in her legislature, upon some question relating to railroads, was so discourteous to North Carolina as to call for a proper but dignified rebuke from our Governor Graham, in his message to our Legislature.

Besides, the general tone of the newspapers, and sometimes public speeches of gentlemen of those States, prove that they regard our people as inferior to theirs. No, sir: if we had a Southern Confederacy, let North Carolina go as "Hagar in the desert," rather than in company where she would be regarded as an inferior."

Strange to say, Mr. Chairman, I quote this passage from the lips of a Southern man.

It would seem to me that every true hearted North Carolinian would denounce this *narrow hearted petulant spirit at once*. *This spirit did not animate them in the days of the revolution*. It is a contracted view, filled with venom, and equalled only by his assault on old Virginia, the mother of the South, that we all should love, the first in every sacrifice of self, and freest from every selfish scheme. It alludes to her as a breeder of slaves for the Southern market, but, as I understand, it was defended by a son of her own most ably last evening, I will pass it with one only remark; that to throw obloquy upon old Virginia, or seem so to understand and to countenance it, is no way to defend the South.

Sir, I will quote no more of this disgusting abandonment of the South. The gentleman has signalized his hostility in too many ways to his hard pressed countrymen.

Sir, he has filched from the toad the diamond in his head—he has robbed the free-soiler of Wisconsin, (Mr. Dorr) of his capital, his famous resolution to close debate, and has saddled *that resolution* which had elicited so much Southern hostility, upon the House.

He has pre-supposed a determination to *dissolve the Union*, and expressed the hope that our own fellow-citizens, the members of the Nashville Convention, "*every traitor of them,*" may be driven into the Cumberland River.

He has pre-supposed a disposition on the part of Southern members of this House, to violate the laws of the land, and announced in advance to them "*that they will soon find themselves where they ought to be—IN THE PENITENTIARY.*"

He has proclaimed in the midst of the most exciting of scenes, when the South was pressed for her life, *and every true heart was strained almost to bursting that "THE CAUSE OF BOSTON WAS THE CAUSE OF ALL."* *It was a callous insult to the feelings of all true Southern men.*

These are things which are incapable of palliation, or explanation.

Sir, Mr. Chairman, I pass with pleasure, from a further consideration of the course pursued by this gentleman towards the South, with a very trifling selection found in his speech suited to his taste. It is:

"Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,
Our height is but the gibbet of our name."

The existence, Mr. Chairman, of a sectional party at the North is fully and satisfactorily evident. Neither Democrats nor Whigs at the North, claim to affiliate with their own parties at the South, upon the subject of slave property. But on the contrary, they repudiate all fellowship and the most moderate and patriotic and rational of them, declare openly, that they condemn us on principle. Then why speak to us, who are the weaker party, about sectional parties? That language should have been long since addressed to the people of the North. It is too late to speak to them. They are embodied; their track is laid out before them; it is across our necks, and they are in the full tide of action. If you speak to us of the *danger of sectional parties* now, it is easily understood. It means the *danger of defending our rights, of resisting wrong*; it counsels submission, and it invites fanaticism to do its worst.

Sir, I cannot concur; I will not assent. But I will most assuredly raise my voice against such madness on the part of the South, whether it be heeded or not. The truth is, that for thirty years, the Missouri compromise has been the policy of the Government. It has been a happy policy. It has given us peace and unity and brotherhood. It should be given to us now, and we ought to reject every proposition less satisfactory.

It was a restriction upon the rights of the South, and she has acted up to it in good faith. Until very recently, all men of all parties, with *very few exceptions*, approved, adopted, and promulgated it. It was carried out in the case of Texas, and also in that of Oregon. And if it were now adopted, what would be the state of the case? It would not so divide the acquired territory, that we would get one half. No. Cast your eye upon the map, and to the most casual glance it is apparent we get not over one-third—the North gets two-thirds. *We have contended for half—we believe it is our right. The North declares we shall not have it. We then consent to take one third—but she declares we not only shall not have one-third, but shall not have one foot of it.*

If the one third is granted to us, we do not ask that it shall be guaranteed to us to be slave territory. On the contrary, we agree that the residents of the country shall be at perfect liberty, when prepared for a State Government, to adopt their own laws and exclude us if they desire. But no, nothing but exclusion, immediate, total, absolute, from the entirety of our common acquisition, will be allowed by the North.

This is very imperious—very unjust. A Southerner should be excused, if his heart should sometimes rebel against such tyranny and injustice—should be excused if his language should sometimes betoken a sense of the shame to be perpetrated upon his people and country, and of indignation at it.

Sir, if granting us the line of 36 deg. 30 min. would unsettle the political power of the country and *endanger the predominance* of the North, I would not be surprised at the course and policy of the North, nor would I complain at the North. *But it does not do so.* Examine the map. Look at *the whole amount of territory* owned by the States in common; trace the line of 36 deg. 30 min., and you find that *nine-tenths* of all territory (out of which many States are hereafter to be formed, increasing the Northern power,) lie North of 36 deg. 30 min., whilst south of it, there is not more than *one-tenth*. Cannot we be trusted by our brothers of the North with one tenth? Are we so *degraded* in the eyes of our Northern fellow citizens, that *justice* to us, or even forbearance, would be a *shame* to them? If so, then our prospect is a bad one, and the destiny of our children is one of horror.

Sir, the North would do justice if the South were firm and united; but, sir, whilst the North is united in every State, the South is united no where, and upon no point; but in truth is divided up and will be destroyed by matricidal hands.

Sir, Mr. Chairman, the Democratic party have made one wide mistake. It is due to truth and history that it should be pointed out. Such errors, if exposed, may be a lesson in future. It was the adoption of the new fangled doctrine of non-intervention. It has unsettled the mind of the country, and the tenets of a party.

Up to the time of the introduction of this policy, and its incorporation into the creed of the Democracy, the Missouri Compromise was the settled policy. Few disputed it. North and South were comparatively agreed. The Democracy, North and South, were united upon it; Southern Whiggery was satisfied with it. And I assert that this whole difficulty would already have been settled if the last Presidential contest had, on our part, been conducted on that basis. It would have been immaterial whether we were successful, or defeated, for the Presidency, the whole Northern Democracy would have come to the House and Senate, adopting, supporting, and proclaiming this basis, and all would have been well. But, sir, we departed from principles that were settled, to experiment in things we knew not of, and now we reap the fruit. It is confusion, discord, and bitter discontent.

Sir, we, ourselves, of the South, knew not what would come out of this measure. Pandora's box could not have been more fruitful of noxious, confounding, and pernicious political schemes and plans. It is the mother of the *non-action* policy. It is the mother of the *Californian* movement, of the *Texian dismemberment*, of the Free soil policy to circumscribe our limits, and then surround us with free States.

We ourselves did not understand it. We conceived the doctrine to mean that the South could go to all and any territory acquired from Mexico, and there live protected, and that slave property would be safe until such time as a State should be formed out of it. But there is the error. It meant, according to its author, a non intervention so complete, that the people of the territory, although foreigners just incorporated, and with laws dissimilar to our own, should have the power in their Territorial Legislature, at once, and before our people could get there, *to act upon the subject, and to declare by law our total and eternal exclusion.*

This doctrine, as now explained, is supported by very few, if any, Southerners. They say it is adopted by the Committee of Thirteen in their report and plan. I do not so consider it; and the fact that a clause is inserted, declaring that no legislation shall be had upon slave property, shows that it is not the improved edition of non intervention. We will all unite deeply to deplore this unfortunate step; and I do it not to injure its great author, for his action has been unanimous in many respects; his stand has been one of the highest responsibility, and I believe him to be, in his heart, as truly a lover of his country as we have in the public councils.

Sir, Mr. Chairman, this Northern sectionalism has had its origin in the jealousy and disappointment of Northern statesmen—in ignorance and disregard of the rights of the South—in the fury of fanaticism that declared itself the Liberty party, enlisted the sanctification of religion, and repudiated without compunction, the obligation of all laws and the national Constitution. With these elements acting, and with time and perseverance, they have attained at the North a perfect unity.

Whilst this is the Northern condition, the South is disunited. The minds of her politicians are unsettled, all wavering and uncertain. The cause of it may be found in the fact that the people have slumbered in fatal security. They have not been guarded by watchful sentinels. Their representatives for years past, from time to time, have proclaimed the danger, but Southern editors have not fully conceived it—they have not studied, investigated, labored to master the facts and principles which governed our troubles—but we have devoted ourselves bitterly and blindly to our party divisions, and thus the masses of our people have not dreamed of our true condition.

We must unite, Mr. Chairman, and that we may do so, every politician should be made to declare himself and debate his propositions—every editor should study, labor, and expound our rights and our means of defence. Our citizens should hold county meetings, State conventions, and conventions of the South—we should patronize those papers which are true to the South, forget for the time our party divisions, and above all, in an hour of so much peril as this, when the churches of the North *have enlisted against us*, and the Northern pulpit *has anathematized us*, we should appeal to the *pious and good*—to the *ministry of the South*, to avert from us this danger, and defend us from this reproach.

The means here adverted to are those by which the North has attained its present unity. Impelled by a sacrilegious spirit, that would tear down the constitution, which protects us at the South, and yet these means have been sufficient to effect a perfect organization and entire unity.

Ours is a much better cause and our unity will be more perfect and more speedily effected.

We contend for our property, our honor, and our rights under the Constitution. They would destroy us in detail, that they may deprive us of all. Theirs is a policy of aggression and attack, ours of defence. They are exposed to no danger—we make no assault on them—whilst we are in constant danger, and the avowed policy of the assailant is so to reduce us that we shall be in their power, and at their mercy! Are our Southern people prepared to submit themselves to the power of the North, and to a political condition such that their only hope shall be the mercy of the North? Never.

Sir, the Southern Convention is in session. Devoutly I trust in their firmness and wisdom. They have been greatly denounced. I am proud to say that I have advocated that Convention,

and I shall defend it so long as it is true to the interests and rights of the South. Those who have denounced it so bitterly, and have imputed to it treasonable objects, are fatally misguided, or are false at heart to the South.

This hostility has grown out of the open denunciation of papers which have been known always as the organs of Northern interests, and which have, by their ability, been able to manufacture among the Southern people a public sentiment hostile to their own interests.

Other public journals have failed to advocate or support those measures conceived and attempted for the defence of the South. The consequences have been seen, and should have impressed upon every Southerner the necessity of a Southern organ here, and the duty of every Southron to contribute to it his freest and fullest support.

I have presented these views in all candor and frankness. They are the convictions made up under a constant series of discussions, with close attention, and from an honest devotion to the interests of the South, of which the State I represent is a part. I am satisfied of the rights and true interests of Arkansians in common with the South, and I have sought so to represent them on this great question as to protect and preserve them. I believe I have represented them in a manner acceptable to three fourths of the State, however much may have been the abuse I have drawn upon my own head; and if the fact is not now apparent, I feel an abiding conviction that plain and frank discussion will prove it.